



Nisga'a Lisims Government

In Collaboration with **MNP**

COVID-19 Government of Canada Support for Fisheries

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA SUPPORT FOR FISHERIES

Created June 1, 2020

Background

The Government of Canada is providing specific support to the aquaculture and fisheries sector in response to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. There are general and specific supports available to the aquaculture industry which are summarized below.

Specific COVID-19 Supports for Aquaculture and Fisheries

- On April 25, 2020, the Government of Canada announced \$62.5 million of new assistance to the fish and processing sector through the **Canadian Seafood Stabilization Fund**. Seafood (including aquaculture) processors are eligible for this funding. There are no details available yet on how to apply for this funding. Additional details on the purpose of the funding are available here.
- The **Fish Harvester Benefit** is a program worth up to \$267.6 million to provide income support for this year's fishing seasons to eligible self-employed fish harvesters and sharespersons crew who cannot access the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. This support will be provided to those that experience fishing income declines of greater than 25% in the 2020 tax year, compared with a reference period to be identified. This measure covers 75% of fishing income losses beyond a 25% income decline threshold, up to a maximum individual entitlement equivalent to what is provided under the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (\$847 per week for up to 12 weeks). There are no details available yet on how to apply for this funding. The Prime Minister's announcement is available here.
- The **Fish Harvester Grant** is a program worth up to \$201.8 million to provide grants to fish harvesters impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and who are ineligible for the Canada Emergency Business Account or equivalent measures. This will provide more liquidity to address non-deferrable business costs. The program would provide non-repayable support of up to \$10,000 to self-employed fish harvesters with a valid fishing licence. Size of the non-repayable support will vary depending on the level of fish harvesters' historic revenue. There are no details available yet on how to apply for this funding. The Prime Minister's announcement is available here.
- The Government of Canada has enabled **Farm Credit Canada with \$5 billion of enhanced lending capacity** to ensure access to necessary capital. Deferral of payments up to six months (principal & interest) or up to 12 months (principal payments), and access to an additional credit line up to \$500K. Producers, agribusinesses, and food processors, including the aquaculture sector are eligible. Eligible recipients can apply here.
- The Government of Canada is providing \$50 million to help farmers, fish harvesters, and all food production and processing employers, put in place the measures necessary to follow the mandatory 14-day isolation period required



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of all workers arriving from abroad. The **Mandatory Isolation Support for Temporary Foreign Workers Program** (MISTFWP) provides support of \$1,500 for each temporary foreign worker, to employers or those working with them to ensure requirements are fully met. The funding is conditional on employers not being found in violation of the mandatory isolation. There is also an exemption for temporary foreign workers from travel restrictions to Canada, along with other foreigners with student and work visas, provided they adhere to a strict 14-day isolation protocol upon arrival. More details and how to apply are available [here](#).

- The Government of Canada is proposing measures or **changes to Employment Insurance (EI)** that would allow self-employed fish harvesters and sharespersons to access EI benefits on the basis of insurable earnings from previous seasons (winter and summer claims). More details will be available soon. The Prime Minister's announcement is available [here](#).
- Food producers can access a \$77.5 million **Emergency Processing Fund** to help food producers access more personal protective equipment (PPE), adapt to health protocols, automate or modernize their facilities, processes, and operations, and respond to emerging pressures from COVID-19 so they can better supply Canadians with food during this period. More details, including eligibility and how to apply, have not been announced. The Prime Minister's announcement is available [here](#).
- The Government of Canada is launching the **Surplus Food Purchase Program** with an initial \$50 million fund designed to help redistribute existing and unsold inventories, which could include products such as potatoes and poultry, to local food organizations who are serving vulnerable Canadians. Food producers, including aquaculture, are eligible. Based on needs, local food organizations will contact businesses of interest. No other details are available at this time. The Prime Minister's announcement is available [here](#).

Other Financial Support Measures for Fisheries

- The **Agriculture and Food Business Solution Fund** is a \$100 million fund that was launched by the Government of Canada in partnership with Forage Capital Inc. (FCC) – a Calgary-based venture capital firm. The fund is set up to support a wide range of enterprises in the agribusiness and agri-food sector (including aquaculture), including companies involved in primary production, agri-tech, manufacturing, packaging and distribution. The fund will help companies in times of need through innovative solutions such as convertible debt investments and other flexible financing solutions. Applications will be assessed individually on their merit and will be supported to a maximum of \$10 million. Minister Bibeau's announcement is available [here](#) and additional details are available [here](#).
- The **Regional Relief and Recovery Fund (RRRF)** is open to all sectors, including aquaculture. Businesses economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic that applied for other federal relief measures and have not been able to secure funds and continue to experience hardship. It delivers repayable contributions or non-repayable contributions to support affected businesses and communities. Eligible costs and amount of support will be determined by Regional Development Agencies based on local realities and economies. For Nisga'a businesses considering applying to the RRRF, please consult the guidelines provided by Western Economic Diversification Canada [here](#).



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COVID-19 response measures available to the aquaculture sector: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/covid19/aquaculture/index-eng.html>

COVID-19 Support for agriculture, agri-food, aquaculture and fisheries: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html#industry>

How to Apply

Eligibility

Each program highlighted above has specific eligibility criteria. Nisga'a citizens should examine the eligibility criteria for each support measure and seek financial advice when needed before applying.

Other Information

COVID-19 – Information for industry, Indigenous peoples, and other partners: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/covid19/industry-industrie/index-eng.html>

Fishery notices related to COVID-19: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/covid-notices-avis-eng.html>